

My understanding is that BellSouth has filed a petition with you, asking the FCC to stop regulating broadband service.

If this petition is granted, this would mean that the large phone companies would no longer be subject to regulatory review of their broadband pricing to independent ISPs. As a result, I fear that their negotiating power will be severely compromised, resulting in consumers paying higher rates in the long term. The more serious threat is that it is even possible that the phone companies could, in the long run, refuse to provide the necessary DSL connections to our local ISP, forcing me to purchase from the phone company.

I've seen what deregulation has done both to local phone service and to mobile phone service. The quality of service has suffered, as has the quality of customer service. Rate plans are confusing at best and usurious in many cases. I fear that the same thing will happen with DSL service, which I depend upon every day. I've received nothing but superlative customer service from my local ISP; even though their prices aren't the cheapest, they are fair and understandable. I think it would be a travesty if ISP service went the way of telephone and cable service where the choices are fewer and fewer and the service is awful.